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SUBJECT: TURKEY SEEKING TO HOST WORLD PETROLEUM
CONGRESS 2011

11. SUMMARY: The government-supported Turkish Organizing Committee seeks U.S. support for its candidacy to host the 20th World Petroleum Congress in 2011 in Istanbul. Turkey's Organizing Committee will meet U.S. World Petroleum Council (WPC) members (Chevron, API, Schlumberger) in Houston April 16 to make their pitch for the U.S. vote at the annual meeting in Uruguay November 29. The cities of Aberdeen, UK and Doha, Qatar are also competing. Istanbul's selection would highlight the importance of Turkey as an energy bridge between the Caspian and Europe (Bosphorus, BTC, "southern gas corridor"). End Summary.

12. On behalf of Turkey's candidacy for Istanbul to hold the 20th World Petroleum Congress in 2011, Dr. Zihni Aksoy, Chair of the Turkish Organizing Committee and a representative of the state oil company TPAO, called on Embassy on March 21 to describe its efforts and to seek U.S. support and its vote at the annual meeting of the World Petroleum Council in November in Uruguay. U.S. WPC members include officials from Chevron, the American Petroleum Institute, Schlumberger, and Halliburton. Aksoy asserted that Istanbul was clearly a more exciting and better prepared site than Aberdeen and Qatar. Moreover, he noted that the UK had already hosted the congress twice in London, but an OPEC member had never been chosen to host. Turkey was a candidate for the 17th Congress and narrowly lost to Brazil that year.

13. Background: The last triennial congress of the 61-member World Petroleum Council was held in 2005 in Johannesburg and the next one is planned for 2008 in Madrid. The host country for a WPC Congress is chosen by secret vote at the annual meeting four years in advance. The WPC and the host determine a specific theme based on the issues of the day. The organization works on variety of issues from technical reserve definitions to environment and social issues.

14. Comment: Hosting the congress would be an opportunity for Turkey to highlight its contribution to global and regional energy supply security, including as an energy bridge and southern gas corridor from the Caspian to Europe. It appears that the USG may not have an official role in the organization, and it is

not clear how U.S. private sector members determine the U.S. vote. Unlike in Turkey, the USG cannot tell oil companies what to do.

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